

THE FRESH HALIBUT SITUATION.

A great scarcity of fresh halibut and a fleet composed entirely of Gloucester ves-

sels, marketing nearly half their fares away from the home port—this is the situation at present. Wherein lies the difficulty and what is the remedy?

A discussion of this question takes one back to not so very long ago, when the two leading halibut concerns here were to use the fisherman expression, "buckling each other." After this, came what may be termed the era of peace, when there was no evident competition, and to all intents and purposes the lion and the lamb had apparently lain down together. Under this new order of things, the companies took turns at taking out trips, and there was no bidding for fares as of old. Such is practically the situation to-day, at least as far as buying halibut fares is concerned.

But the graver difficulty presented itself about two years ago. The skipper of one of the vessels taking out at one of the companies claimed that he was not getting the proper treatment, and in this complaint he was joined not only by other skippers, but by some owners. A while after this some vessels began to go to Boston.

Not many went at first, only two or three, but gradually the number grew larger till the exodus assumed alarming proportions. After a while some of the vessels came back to the home port, but only for a trip or two, then returned to the Boston market. Gradually the number has increased, until now not only "outside" vessels but firm crafts and vessels in which even directors in the local halibut company are owners, go to Boston with trips.

At present the situation is manifestly to the disadvantage of Gloucester. Since August came in, 16 regular halibut fares have been landed and six of them, all Gloucester vessels, marketed their fares at Boston. These Boston fares aggregated about 200,000 pounds, while the ten fares brought here amounted to about 230,000 pounds.

Add to this the fact that the "taking turn" system is still in vogue here, and skippers who land halibut fares at Boston openly declare that they are satisfied with their treatment at that port, and we have the situation as it is to-day.

Now what is the remedy, for there certainly must be one? It does not appear to be so much a question why the halibut vessels went to Boston as what must be done to induce them to once more bring their fares to the home port. The question is not one for much open discussion, but there is a remedy for the present existing situation, and it is within the province of local halibut dealers and vessel owners to apply it. One thing is certain, Gloucester cannot afford to have her fresh halibut fleet follow her haddock fleet to Boston.

We hear that one of the companies here is contemplating a radical change from the present method. If this is so, it cannot fail to be for the benefit of owners and men, and will probably bring about one of the greatest halibut wars in the history of the business.

Friday, Aug. 30.

DAILY TIMES FISH BUREAU.

To-day's Arrivals and Receipts.

Sch. Lelia E. Norwood, Quero Bank, 9000 lbs. cod, 24,000 lbs. halibut.
Sch. Masconomo, dory handling, Quero Bank, 170,000 lbs. cod.
Sch. Emerald, Boston Bay, 38 bbls. salt mackerel.
Sch. Wm. H. Cross, Boston Bay, 50 bbls. salt mackerel.
Sch. Marguerite, netting, 50 fresh mackerel.
Sch. Esther Madeline, netting, 100 fresh mackerel.
Sch. Richard Wainwright, Boston Bay, 105 bbls. salt mackerel.

To-day's Market.

Board of Trade prices: large handline Georges cod, \$4.00 per cwt., medium do., \$3.25; large trawl Georges, \$3.75, medium do., \$3.00; handline cod from deck caught east of Cape Sable, \$3.75; medium do., \$3.00; large trawl bank cod, \$3.25; medium do., \$2.75 large dory handline cod, \$3.50, medium do., \$3.

Splitting prices, large cod, \$2.00; medium do., \$1.50; snapper do., 40 cts.; cusk, \$1.50; snapper do., 40 cts.; haddock, \$1.00; hake, \$1.00; pollock, 60 cts.

Outside sales of shack fish, \$2.00 per cwt. for large cod, \$1.50 for market cod, \$1.50 for cusk, \$1.00 for hake, \$1.00 for haddock, 60 cents for pollock.

Outside sales bank cod, \$3.50 per cwt for large and \$3.00 for mediums

Outside sales dory handline bank cod, \$3.5-8 per cwt. for large and \$3.25 per cwt. for medium

Rips cod, \$4 per cwt. for large and \$3.15 for small.

Bank halibut, 11 cts. per lb. for white and 7 cts. for gray.

Fledged halibut, 6 cts. per lb.

Fresh mackerel, 22 cents for large and 5 cents for tinkers.

Salt mackerel, \$13.70 per bbl. for large and \$13.16 for tinkers.

Swordfish 10 cents per lb.

Boston

Aug. 30.—Ar., sch. Dawson City, 8000 haddock, 5000 cod, 3000 hake, 500 pollock.
Sch. Rebecca, 40 bbls. fresh mackerel.
Sch. Alice M. Guthrie, 35,000 fresh fish.
Haddock, \$3; large cod, \$3.50; market cod, \$2.50; hake, \$1.25; pollock, 80 cents. fresh tinkers, 6 cts. each.

Mackerel Notes.

The fare of sch. Navahoe sold to Shute & Merchant at \$13.70 per barrel.

Capt. Turner of sch. Blanche F. Irving, at Portland yesterday with a fine mackerel fare, reports that schs. Natalie B. Nickerson and Mary E. Harty took small schools off Seguin Wednesday evening.

Big Price.

The fare of sch. Emerald, 38 barrels of salt tinkers, sold to S. H. Levin's Sons of Philadelphia for \$500, which is about \$13.16 per barrel, the highest price for tinkers this season.

Quick Halibut Trip.

Sch. Margaret, Capt. Samuel Colson, arrived yesterday afternoon from Western Bank after a remarkably quick trip, only 20 days, with a splendid fare of 25,000 pounds of halibut and 8000 pounds of salt cod. Capt. Colson reports elegant weather, it being clear and calm all of the time the vessel was on the bank, and actually hot every day, much warmer than it has been ashore.

Capt. Colson is one of those capable, quiet master mariners who go easily along and always makes a good year's work.

OFF ISLE AU HAUT.

Sch. Marguerite Haskins Got Big Mackerel Haul Thursday.

HEADED UP 220 SALTED BARRELS.

Only One Other Seiner Was in the Vicinity.

Sch. Marguerite Haskins, Capt. Benj. Spurling, of this port, was at Southwest Harbor yesterday with a fine trip of mackerel stowed in the hold. The Haskins only went out from here a few days ago and headed for the Maine coast. Capt. Spurling found signs of fish off Isle au Haut, and hung around there, Thursday afternoon he and his crew received their reward, for a fine school came up, which they set for and secured a haul which salted down 220 headed barrels.

Capt. Spurling reports that there was only one other vessel in the vicinity and he did not know whether or not she got any fish. He reports some fish there.

The fish are large and of the finest quality, being about the same as have been taken off here.

This is the best mackerel news for some time and other catches are hoped for.

Fifty-one sail of the seining fleet harbored at Boothbay harbor Thursday evening, and laid there yesterday during a fresh southerly. Sch. Mary E. Harty took 60 barrels and sch. Natalie B. Nickerson, 140 barrels off Seguin Wednesday evening. Several others took small schools.

The fare of sch. Wm. H. Cross sold to the Andrews Co. at \$14 per barrel.

Sch. Nellie Dixon with 25 bbls. of salt mackerel was at Boston yesterday.

QUEER CATCH.

Dolphin Secured and Brought in by Sch. Margaret.

Probably the First One Ever Seen at this Port.

Sch. Margaret, Capt. Samuel Colson, which arrived here yesterday afternoon from Western Bank, has on board a curiosity in the shape of a dolphin. Capt. Colson says the weather on the trip was exceedingly warm, and this, he thinks accounts for the fact that the dolphin played around the vessel in schools while she was on the bank. One was caught on a hook and brought to port. It is quite a curiosity, as it is said to be the first one ever brought to this port.

Cornered Nova Scotia Mackerel.

Two American commission merchants at Halifax have bought up all the pickled mackerel obtainable along the shore, for which they paid \$7.50 per barrel. The fish were shipped to Boston to-day on the steamer Yarmouth.

Halibut Sale.

The fare of sch. Lelia E. Norwood sold to the New England Fish Co. at 12 and 8 cents per pound for white and gray.